

University of California, Los Angeles
Graduate Student Association Forum #2, Fall Quarter
Wednesday, November 7, 2018, 5:30pm

Forum minutes taken by Jackie D'Almeida, Director of Communications

CALL TO ORDER – 5:43 pm

Parliamentary inquiry –

- Question about how to add to the agenda a discussion about implementation of UC Path.
 - Answer: We can make a motion
- Motion to discuss UC Path implementation at the end of the agenda (seconded).
 - **Vote: APPROVED.**

Executive Officer Reports

Michael Skiles, GSA President

- Council member Koretz and Assemblymember Kamlager-Dove will be swearing in the new Westwood Neighborhood Council tonight.
- We want to intersect what is happening in Westwood with what is happening at UCLA.
- My People First initiative – trying to get UCLA and Westwood to focus more on human beings than automobiles, including introduction of bike lanes and getting rid of extraneous pedestrian walk signals. Many of these are often difficult for people with disabilities.
- We'll be advocating for student-friendly businesses.
- With respect to housing:
 - We've had successful campaigns that drew attention to the unaffordability of grad housing – UCLA Housing has done a lot within their artificially constrained department.
 - Part of the problem is that the University believes that housing must be fully self-supporting – the cost must be fully borne by student rents and fees.
 - Housing must also pay money into other departments.
 - We need to be urging the University to review their funding priorities.
 - There's been a push by Napolitano to further bureaucratize the University at the centralized level, which has simply added additional levels of bureaucracy.
 - We see increasing administrative bloat – the Luskin Conference center for example, these are all places for advocates to say "let's apply more funding for students, let's fund housing."
- Question: are there enough units for students? Last week the Housing Department said there were the same number of grad students as there are units.
 - Answer: He must have been referring to the number of students residing in grad student housing. Their numbers also only include the number of eligible grad students. Many students don't meet the requirements or term out.
- Question: will the Housing Department share their presentation with us?

- Answer: We will follow up with him to get it.

Eric Hu, GSA Vice President of Internal Affairs

- We have hired a Finance Director, you can email her at finance@gsa.asucla.ucla.edu.
- We now have regular office hours at GSA office, feel free to stop by and speak to our Finance Director.
- Please turn in your Signature Authorization and Certification of Council Election in order to process requisition forms.
- The contact person at SGA is Irma, her email address is itirado@asucla.ucla.edu.

Michelle Viorato, GSA Vice President of External Affairs

- This morning we had a phone call with other EVPs
 - There is an issue we are addressing for international students: a new proposal by the Department of Homeland Security to change F1 visas to only allow a certain amount of time until students graduate.
 - I will keep you updated on this. We are working with other GSA EVPs from other campuses.
- I am very interested in UC PATH advocacy.
 - UC Santa Barbara has been working on this closely to get student testimonies in order to engage in advocacy.
- I have been working closely with Mothers of Color in Academia to address parenting issues – we were able to meet with the vice president of UCOP. The UC system will prioritize child healthcare facilities.
 - We are looking for parenting student advocates to join a task force.
- I was able to appoint new directors who have been seconded, I also had other students who had expressed a desire to volunteer. One will focus on environmental issues and one will focus on LGBTQ issues.
- We held a graduate student roundtable to learn more about graduate student concerns, and we are hoping to hold more.

Ashley Wright:

- Since the last forum we were able to fill positions on our committees, all of those meetings are proceeding.
- No other major updates.

UCGPA Presentation

Michelle Viorato, GSA Vice President of External Affairs

- UCSA gave us a great overview last week of what they have been able to accomplish.
- UCGPC has granted us conditional membership, I will be bringing forth the charter for you all to vote on next week.
- UCSA historically represented all students in the UC system, including grads and undergrads.
 - Includes members from most UCs, holds three conferences per year.

- Last year there was discussion of having a grad-only organization and leaving UCSA.
- UCGPC was eventually able to form:
 - One of the things they've done was to hold a Students of Color Conference.
 - They've worked on setting up a lot of policy statements and stances specifically for grad students.
 - Advocacy Day will occur in Sacramento this year, and I will be looking for students to join me in advocacy measures.
 - We have had access to Regent's meetings and have been able to take graduate student concerns to them.
- The charter was ratified by 8 out of 10 schools, we are one of the only ones who have not.
- They are looking for graduate students to fill both elected and appointed positions.
- We have joint appointments to the Title IX Student Advisory Board and Police Accountability Task Force.
- I feel that there is a lot to gain from me being a member of both GSA and UCGPC this year.

Resolution to Cap Administrative Pay at the Governor's Salary

Zackery Fisher, Forum Representative from School of Law

- I've prepared a resolution to cap administrative pay at the Governor's Salary
- Graduate students have sent us to represent their interests within the context of our institutional mission.
- There is an unprecedented movement of wealth inequalities and people struggling to make ends meet.
- Student's cannot afford to pay housing here. Students need to make at least \$50,000 annually to make University housing affordable.
- These problems can be remedied – we don't need to garner more resources than we already have but re-examine our current allocation of resources.
- If we adopt this resolution as official policy – the savings of capping their salaries will gain us 2.3 million, enough to give every grad students a savings of \$600 per month.
- Passing this resolution will send a message that we stand up for the needs of graduate students. I humbly ask you to support this resolution on behalf of your respective councils.
- Motion to move the resolution (seconded).
 - **Vote: APPROVED**
- We open the floor to discussion.
- The chair recognizes Representative from Education Andrew:
 - It's accurate to say that we don't have the power to cap these things, but this organization does carry a lot of clout. We do need some bargaining chips when holding discussions with UC Regents. This does send a strong message.
- The chair recognizes the representative from Computer Sciences:
 - Have other organizations called for this?
 - Answer: Not that I have heard, but that would be the next step.

- *Parliamentary Inquiry -*
 - Question: Can I ask a question and then after his answer ask a follow up?
 - Answer: the informal back and forth we are having now is not the most rigorous enforcement of Robert's Rule of Order, but we try to remain friendly to a follow up question.
- Question: Does this speak for only UCLA chancellors or other people?
 - Answer: I'm only referring to UCLA right now.
- Question: People may be concerned that the costs will fall back on students. Also UCLA is the top public institution and we need to be considering what it means to work for the best public university, and how the compensation compares to other peer institutions.
 - Answer: This is not a resolution meant to address the funding mechanism – it is very complicated about where money goes. This is simply about aligning the institution with the principle that \$202,000 salary is a generous and adequate salary. This isn't about changing anything tomorrow but is the very first step to say: this is what graduate students believe, and it's the right thing to do.
- Michael Skiles: As soon as we pass this, administrators may realize that students are looking at their salaries, and that they need to attend to affordability. When they argue that they can't afford things we can push back, and I think this moves us in an admirable direction.
 - We should broaden this to the UC system, instead of just UCLA
- Question: is ASCUCLA part of UCLA?
 - GSA considers them to be an autonomous organization.
- Statement: Beyond having unaffordable housing, we also have to think about the quality of our schooling. The classrooms are often poor quality, and we should check to see if professors are meeting quality standards. I think this would be a great first step.
- Statement: we should strengthen the rhetoric, because this is about more than just fiscal responsibility, it's about wealth inequality.
 - Response: I do think there is a legitimate fiscal responsibility question that we don't have to give up.
- Statement: Salary is just a component of compensation, for example the chair of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion makes only approximately half of his compensation in salary.
 - Answer: Yes, the competitiveness argument is a strong one, but we can argue that we will still get qualified candidates. Secondly, I do not include overall compensation in this, but we can address that later on. This is not meant to be comprehensive but only a first step.
- Eric Hu: To put this in context, most surgeons at UCLA do not make nearly this much.
- Question: You acknowledge that this doesn't have much teeth, so what are next steps?
 - Answer: we can go to other UCs and gain support, we can also determine the specifics of the resolution.
- Statement: I am bound by my council to vote against this. They brought up that this is overly symbolic, that it could potentially make UCLA less competitive, people may not

accept these jobs at the lower salary. We are not necessarily against the sentiment but the logistics. For example, why only the chancellors?

- Answer: this is about the fact that there are so many resources, but we need to look at where they are going. I don't believe this is overly symbolic and I do think it will be put to use.
- Statement: I don't think the argument that we should tie administrative pay to the Governor's pay is necessarily fair. A lot of people might not understand why these two jobs are related.
 - Answer: I made the connection because the Governor is also an administrator, and because I think this amount is a very comfortable amount. These are both public institutions.
- Michelle Viorato: Argument can be made that Governor's salaries are low because they have been able to enrich themselves prior to their run for office. UC Administrators may not have had that opportunity.
- Statement that we should potentially motion to table this to next week to give people time to go over this and have creative input.
 - Response: I feel strongly that this is something we should vote on today, I don't see it as a very complicated issue.
- Motion to table resolution until next week (seconded)
 - **Vote: APPROVED.**

Discussion of UC Path

- Many have had issues with not getting paid on time, or not getting paid at all. Some have mentioned that although they didn't get paid on time, they still had to pay housing and were not granted an extension.
- Statement: An official grievance has been filed. We should all encourage people who are having this issue to sign on to the grievance to make it stronger.
- Michelle Viorato: UCSA has been trying to get involved in this because undergraduate students are also affected by this. UC Riverside was one of the first campuses who was affected by this. When UC Patch met with UCOP they stated that everything was fine.
 - The next UC Regent's meeting is this month, I encourage as many people as possible to apply to show that this is an important issue.
- Statement: When issues like this come up the union is a good way to raise a collective voice. Signing on to the grievance is a good way to get attention. Getting GSA and the union together might be effective. It may be helpful to get GSR's on board.
- Statement: GSR's have had payment problems in the past, but now payment issues are ubiquitous.
- Michelle Viorato: UC Merced had similar problems and were able to advocate and the University agreed to offer emergency money. We have a meeting later this month and I plan to bring this up.
- Statement: Something that should be pursued is a zero-interest loan, and potentially housing should offer a late fee waiver.

- Statement: They do offer a zero-interest loan, but it's not very much and there are many caveats.
- Eric Hu: Please go back to your councils and compile grievances, next forum we can bring them together and decide next steps.
- Michelle Viorato: Please wait until next week when I can email you all the survey so we don't have to do twice as much work. Is there anything you want me to ask when I have my meeting with UC Path?
 - Question: What are they going to do to fix the additional cost that people incurred to bridge the gap?
 - Question: How do they classify staff vs. GSR's?

ADJOURNMENT 7:20pm